

California Cancer Registry

Production Automation and Quality Control Unit

Data Alert - Registrar 2016-024

NPCR Stage Reporting Requirements and Use of SEER*RSA

Please find below important information related to the potential impact of using SEER*RSA during data abstraction and processing by regional or central registries and/or reporting facilities. During a meeting of the National Coordinating Council for Cancer Surveillance (NCCCS) that took place at the Annual Meeting of the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) in June, the group discussed important considerations for any registries using the SEER*RSA tool and submitting data to NPCR (as well as to other standard setters, such as CoC). As a result of those discussions, NPCR is providing some additional guidance for all NPCR-funded programs. *As an FYI, California is an NPCR funded registry.*

Therefore, the information below applies to California:

Data Abstractors:

- NPCR requires that directly coded AJCC stage data is collected per AJCC coding manuals and rules only, and that staging data **should not** be processed through external tools, such as SEER*RSA, prior to submission to NPCR.
- Reporting facilities are NOT to use SEER*RSA for data they submit to regional/central registries as that data will ultimately be submitted to NPCR.

Regional Registries/Vendors:

- Even if the registry/vendor thinks the external tool (such as SEER*RSA) includes the capability of restoring originally coded staging data values through an algorithm, it is not permissible to process staging data through external tools prior to submission to CCR and ultimately NPCR.
- The ability of any algorithm to process directly coded TNM staging data into other coding systems and then convert the data back into directly coded TNM staging values cannot be guaranteed to the satisfaction of many NCCCS members. As a result, data submitted to NPCR should not be processed and converted through any external tools prior to submission, regardless of the tool.

NOTE: NPCR will soon provide for public use an algorithm for populating the NPCR AJCC derived stage variables. The NPCR algorithm will be available in forms that can be used by any state central registry to run against their data in order to populate the NPCR AJCC derived stage variables prior to their data submission to NPCR.

All of the above steps are required in order to ensure the consistency and integrity of the staging data submitted to NPCR. It is critical that we have confidence in the data submitted to NPCR so that the data can continue to be used to monitor cancer trends over time, show cancer patterns in various populations and identify high-risk groups, guide planning and evaluation of cancer control programs, help set priorities for allocating health resource, and advance clinical, epidemiologic, and health services research.

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